

*The true Gratification of the sensual
Appetites recommended,*

I N A

S E R M O N,

P R E A C H E D

In the Parish Church of DELVIN.

Dedicated to the Right Honourable

Lady *SARAH POLE.*

WITH AN ELEGIAC

P O E M

On the DEATH of the Right Honourable

MARY PONSONBY,

Late Countess of *Drogheda,*

Not till now published.

By the Revd. *MOORE BOOKER*, M. A.
Vicar of *Delvin*, in the Diocese of *Meath*, and Chaplain
to the Right Hon. the Earl of *Drogheda.*

D U B L I N :

Printed by HENRY SAUNDERS, at the Corner of
Christ-Church-Lane, in *High-Street*, 1756.

To the R E A D E R.

SO many Volumes of excellent Sermons have been published within a few Years, that throwing a single one into the World, written on a common moral Subject, such as the People hear every Day, may be imputed to the Pride of appearing in Print. It was preached in my own Church about six Months ago, where a good many of my Parishioners are Methodists, who were very constant Attendants on public Duties, and their Lives blameless: For which Reason I gave them all the Encouragement in my Power, and writ some Papers in their Favour. But some of them took such Offence at this Sermon, that they have entirely withdrawn themselves from their Parish Church. And the Reader that will give himself the Trouble to peruse some Extracts of Letters, written to the Revd. John Wesley, and others, upon the Occasion, which I have annexed to the Sermon by Way of Appendix, will be convinced that I have Recourse to the Press in Defence of my own Character, and print to obviate Infamy, without the least View of courting Praise.



To the Right Honourable the

Lady *SARAH POLE.*

WHEN the Sermon, which now begs your Ladyship's Protection, was last preached, it had the Honour to have you one of its Hearers: And, I am informed, you approved of it, which has much encouraged me to lay it at your Feet.

I HAVE, Madam, all my Life studied to deserve, but could never learn to importune. Whether it was owing to the Want of Assurance or Humility, I dare not say. But your Ladyship's illustrious Ancestors, for three Generations, have conferred Benefits on me, without my asking, and to them I owe my little All. To your Great-Grandfather my Father was indebted for the Preferments he had in the Church. In the House of *Mellefont* I drew my first Breath, and thence derive the Honour of my Christian Name.

BEING now forced into the World to vindicate my Character, which has been ever dear to me, I have Reason to thank my Detractors for the Opportunity they have given me of publishing my Acknowledgments of Benefits received from your Ladyship's Family.

THO' I am writing a Dedication to a Lady, Nature has, perhaps, cursed me with such Antipathy to every Thing that looks like Flattery, that I am unable to execute it in the usual Form, and set you out in all the Blaze of Beauties, both of your Person and Mind. The World will excuse me, as it acknowledges your Ladyship the last of your Sex that could be pleased with it. I shall only say, I have Reason to believe your Ladyship is never named, in any Company, without Honour and Respect.

I KNOW you, Madam, sprung from a good Stock. Your Grandmother, the Lady *Duncannon*, was, to my personal Knowledge, an excellent Woman.—Your Mother, the late Countess of *Drogheda*,—to think on her without a Tear, hard for any that knew her,—impossible to me. —I writ a little Poem on her Death, which has scarce seen the Light, and which your Father, notwithstanding the Intimacy with which he honours me, never saw. Your Ladyship cannot be offended if I here present it to you and the World. It came hot from the Heart, which is all it has to recommend it. Faint as the Picture is drawn, I hope it will be copied by more than your Ladyship.

THIS Morn,—some rise to toil, and some
to play,

And all abroad appear like Yesterday.

But dost thou know, poor World, that thou hast
lost

As great a Treasure as a World cou'd boast ?

The fairest, sweetest, goodliest of her Kind,

Her Face angelic,—God-like was her Mind.

In Pomp of State, in Youth and Beauty's Bloom,

No vainer in her Chariot than her Tomb.

The

The Coronet ennobled by her Brow,
Not one vain Hour in Life more priz'd than now.

CELESTIAL Muse,——'tis not thy Task to sing,
The brightest Sparkler in the Box or Ring;
Spadillio's fav'rite Dame, whose Skill was known,
And all her Worth in all Assemblies shown:
But one, tho' high in Station, seen by few,
Whom circling Graces screen'd from public View.

GRACES like her's, illustrious when reveal'd,
In humble Modesty lie most conceal'd.
Thus heavenly Bodies as their Course they run,
And climb to high Conjunction with the Sun,
Desert our Views, as to Perfection near,
And, when their Orbs are brightest, disappear.
Thus is the brightest Planet ever found
To run its Circuit in the narrowest Round.
Thus *Drogheda* shining, grac'd her little Sphere,
Where nothing but her Duty was her Care.

BUT ah! what Phrase can reach, what Tongue
reveal,
And where's the bless'd enlighten'd Bard to tell
Of Graces so remov'd from Mortal's View?
Celestial Muse, that Task devolves on you.
Celestial Muse,——'tis no fantastic Maid
That I invoke;——such Themes despise such Aid.
Successful Spirit, thy faithful Records bring,
Late Guardian Angel of the Fair I sing.
Joyous thy Hours, while hov'ring o'er thy Ward,
No trifling Action seen, or Language heard;
No loose Behaviour made thee droop thy Head,
Or ting'd thy beauteous Cheek with deeper red.

METHINKS I see thee clasp thy darling Care,
Bound thro' obsequious Realms of yielding Air;
Safely conduct her thro' the pathless Vasts
Of azure Skies, and wild etherial Wastes.

Her

Her modest Doubts dismiss'd, and humble Fears,
 She treads the Clouds, and tramples o'er the Stars.
 Higher and higher still behold she soars,
 And reaches now your *everlasting Doors* ;
 Nor adamantine Gates can give Delay,
 Nor Cherub's flaming Sword obstruct the Way.
 Congratulating Angels round her throng,
 And bid her welcome with the Seraph's Song.
 Still as they hear thee, happy Guardian, trace
 Her pious Acts, and tell how good she was,
 Each Voice is rais'd, and Paradise is more
 A joyous Mansion than it was before.

So wou'd our Earth be blest'd, if ev'ry Fair
 Wou'd learn and live th'illustrious Character.
 Then wou'd the bright Example strongly move,
 Cou'd I but sing what thou hast told above.
 Then teach me, happy Spirit, to declare
 The Truths which list'ning Angelsjoy to hear.
 Vouch thou th'informing Verse, and recommend
 The Christian, Wife, the Mother, and the Friend.

No light Amusements e'er cou'd disengage
 Her Hours devoted to the sacred Page ;
 With Joy she read, and found its Leaves impart
 Those Laws which Nature stamp'd upon her
 Heart.

Her tender Offspring, first of all her Cares,
 The anxious Subjects of her Hopes and Fears ;
 With curious Eye she watch'd their lying down,
 Nor Hand must raise or feed them but her own :
 She taught their infant Tongues with early Care
 To list to Heaven the tributary Prayer.
 To form the growing Christian ne'er was laid
 A Task upon her Chaplain, or her Maid.
 Such Toil her Joy, who, in each Word and
 Thought,
 Liv'd all the pious Lesson that she taught.

In

IN Home-Affairs the golden Main she steer'd,
Nor idly spent, nor pitifully spar'd.

IF Charity, like her's, can be express'd,
Teach me to draw a Transcript of her Breast.
Of her Dependents none cou'd e'er complain
He fear'd his Burthen, or he felt his Chain;
Each Vassal rul'd by Mercy's tender Laws,
And few were guilty when she judg'd the Cause.
Soon as her Neighbour's prosp'rous Fate was
known,
The sweet reflected Joy became her own.
In his Distress she bore a Mourner's Part,
And Grief that reach'd her Ear must reach her
Heart:
Nor reach in vain,—for every Wound must share
The healing Balm, or the pitying Tear.

SOME curious Leaves were turn'd at Close of
Day,
To chase the busy Cares of Life away;
And gen'rous Drops were ever found to wait
The big Events of kind or adverse Fate.
But as the moving Scene began to rise,
Her tender Soul sat melting in her Eyes.
——'Twas then she shin'd——Heaven! how di-
vinely fair,
Diamonds and Pearls were cheap to every Tear.
——Adown my Cheeks the manly Torrent flow'd,
And all her Virtue thro' my Bosom glow'd.

FLINTY the Breast that can those Hours recal,
And bid the summon'd Tear neglect to fall.
——Accept, bless'd Shade, these briney Off'rings
due,
No more to mingle social Drops with you.

PROFITIOUS Spirit——for such high Beings can
see

What gen'rous Minds enlarg'd may hope to be ;
If still relenting as on Earth you hear
Th'immense Petition, and th'aspiring Pray'r ;
My Spirit, as thine, shall quit th'incumb'ring
Clay,

Then to thy blissful Mansions point its Way.
Nor is th'ambitious Wish too vainly rais'd,
Above the Distance whence on Earth I gaz'd ;
Admiring gaz'd, in ev'ry View to find
The heavenly Visage of a human Mind.
Graces in humble Dawn——what vast Delight,
To sit and see thee in meridian Light ?
With hasty Joy thy lov'd Commands attend,
And ever boast thee Patroness and Friend :
The pleasing Task thro' endless Time pursue,
And smile as pleas'd as I have wept with you.

THAT your Ladyship may long live the Pattern
of such uncommon Virtue, and trace the glorious
Example to latest Posterity, shall be the daily
Prayer of,

M A D A M,

Your Ladyship's most obedient,

And unfeignedly dutiful,

Humble Servant,

MOORE BOOKER.

A

S E R M O N, &c.

19 PSALM, V. II.

In keeping of them there is great Reward.

HO^LY *David*, the undoubted Author of this Psalm, begins it in the most exalted Strain of poetic Eloquence; *The Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy Work.* He mentions the wonderful Successions of Days and Nights, measured out by the Sun's uninterrupted Course, which runs its constant propitious Round, from one End of Heaven to the other, for the kind and beneficent Purpose of warming universal Nature into Life and Activity; and *there is nothing bid from the Heat thereof.* He tells us, their Sound is gone out into all Lands, their Words into the Ends of the World; and that there is neither Speech nor Language, where their Voice is not heard.—So that no Creature, capable of drawing Conclusions from sensible Objects, can behold the Works of Nature, which are so magnificently and so universally displayed, and not acknowledge them the Works of a wise, omnipotent and bountiful Creator,

B

who

who had the Happiness of his Creatures so nearly in his View, that nothing was wanting to their hospitable Entertainment in this Earth, which he had assigned them for the Place of their Abode.

BUT, tho' the World is so elegantly furnished out for our Use and Delight, tho' Heaven has made such ample Provision for us, were we left to ourselves, in the Use and Application of its various Benefits, how impossible would it be, through the Infirmary of our Nature, but that *our Table would become our Snare*, and that *that which was given us as Wealth, prove to us an Occasion of falling?* But our tender Maker has provided against this Danger. He has given us Laws by his holy Prophets, since the World began, and in Fulness of Time by his Son, written not only by his Servants in his Word, but by Nature in our Hearts, whereby it may be easy for us, not only to use the World without abusing it, but to walk secure thro' its most slippery Paths, tho' ever surrounded with Dangers and Snares.

AND hence it is, that the raptured Psalmist had no sooner discharged his Breath from the swelling Theme, with which it laboured, of the harmonious Contrivance of the Works of Nature, to give us Life, and make that Life a Blessing, but the divine Law naturally presents itself, introducing Matter of new Wonder and extatic Joy. Carnal Men look upon it as too severe a Restraint on their reasonable Nature; but such live a brutal Life of Sense, and are susceptible of no pleasurable Impressions, but what are conveyed thro' the Channels of a mortal Body, which they have corrupted. But holy *David*, who had meditated thereon Day and Night, and made it the Standard and Rule of his Actions, employs all his Eloquence to display its Excellence. He appeals to the several Senses, and to those interesting Objects that captivate and allure them, and then pronounces the divine Com-
mandments

mandments more desirable to the Soul, than the highest Gratification of Sense to its particular Appetite.—If Light be dear to the Eye, and Joy to the Heart, the Commandments of God are desirable and lovely, for they *rejoice the Heart*, and *give Light to the Eyes*, v. 8.—If the Honey and the Honey-comb be sweet to the Taste, and the largest Quantity of the finest Gold has attractive Charms to engage our Pursuit, in the Commandments of God are found Blessings more exquisite and lasting; *finer than Gold, yea than much-fined Gold, sweeter also than the Honey and the Honey-comb*, v. 10: and to perpetuate their Benefits, they *endure for ever*, v. 9.—If to direct a benighted Traveller in his Way, if to warn him of the Wicked that lie in wait for his Life, if to provide for his Escape, and conduct him to his Home, be Favours worthy our grateful Acceptance, this is the Characteristic of the divine Commandments, *by them, says David, is thy Servant warned*. Thus the ravished Psalmist celebrates the Importance of the divine Commandments, and he sums up all in the Words of the Text, *In keeping of them there is great Reward*. In Prosecution of this Subject, all that will be necessary is, to prove the general Proposition in the Text, by laying before you some particular Advantages attending the due Observation of God's Laws, and of the formidable Evils that are the necessary Consequence of their Violation.

I do not, my Brethren, advance this Doctrine upon the least Suspicion that any here are unconvinced of the Reality of the Rewards annexed to a religious Life. But, tho' this important Truth has been impressed by the Light of Nature on the Hearts of all Men in all Ages, too many look upon them, as at so great a Distance, that they are either wholly neglected or pursued with Indifference. But the Rewards which the sensual

Appetites propose are always present, glistening in the Eye, and alluring to the sensitive Appetite, with a Fallacy so successful, that too many engage in the Pursuit, tho' like Shadows they fly before them, 'till they are lost in a Labyrinth of Disappointment and Distress.

IN order, therefore, to disabuse such impatient ones as disregard the divine Commandments, because the Rewards annexed to them seem tardy and distant, I shall here make it my principal Aim to shew, that even in this Life, tho' we were to die like Brutes, and cease for ever, the social Pleasure, and the calm Content, found, and only found in the Ways of God's Laws, and in the Works of his Commandments, will prove an ample Recompence for every Difficulty we can meet in the Pursuit; as they are powerful to smooth the rugged Paths of Life, soften the most rigid Dispensations of Providence, and turn afflictive Accidents into Ways of Pleasantness and Paths of Peace.

IF we take but a transient View of our ten Commandments, that compendious System of our universal Duty, we shall find them calculated for this End: So frequently inculcated, and so awfully *promulged*, because so indispensibly necessary to the Happiness of Mankind.

THE Duties of the first Table are so many Advantages and Ornaments to our Nature. As all Nations agree in worshipping some Kind of Divinity, how has our indulgent Creator distinguished *us* with a Revelation of his Nature and his Will? And since we must worship, from a Kind of Instinct in our Constitution, how great is our Privilege to be honoured with a *reasonable Service*. Here we have been taught, that God is but one, simple, pure, uncompounded Being; as the Belief of more than one Omnipotent approaches the Absurdity of Atheism itself.

THUS,

THUS, while many Nations grope in the Dark for a Divinity to adore, and inscribe their Temples to the unknown God. Some worshipping Stocks and Stones, Sun, Moon and Stars, common Fire, Animals, even Reptiles, and every Thing that happened to strike a warm Imagination. How gracious has our God been, in manifesting himself to us? whereby we are prevented from laborious Searches after him, and wild Conclusions, vain and ridiculous; from bowing down before the Stock of a Tree, and offering like them the Sacrifice of Fools. Such shocking Affronts to God and to Reason are obviated by the first and second Commandments; where we learn, that the highest Arch-angel in the Hierarchy of Heaven is altogether unworthy to resemble him.

HOLY and reverend is *his* Name — The third secures the Honour due to it. Were it treated with the profane Familiarity of being invoked upon every frivolous Occasion, I need not tell you the sad Consequences of that Contempt it must necessarily fall under.

THE fourth seems intended a mere Law of Mercy to the Slaves of the *Israelites*, Beasts as well as Men; — *That thine Ox and thine Ass may rest, and that the Stranger that is within thy Gates may rest.* But, altho' in its primitive Institution no religious Exercises are enjoined on that Day, the Reasonableness and Fitness for one Day in seven to be sequestered from worldly Affairs, and dedicated to God, and the Use to be made of it being found both in the Old and New Testament, and also in the Heart of every intelligent Creature, may incline us to think it of moral Obligation *.

Now,

* From the Time of the Institution of the *Jewish* Synagogues, where the People assembled, and *Moses* was read to them every Sabbath-Day, that Nation is observed never once to have fallen into Idolatry, to which from its Beginning it had been

Now, if the Commandments of the first Table are so advantageous to the spiritual Concerns of Men, nothing could render them more miserable in their temporal Interest than an Exemption from the Duties contained in the second Table.

WHAT Parent would undergo the Care and Expence necessary to support the tender Infancy of his Offspring, deny himself so many Comforts, if not Necessaries of Life, to provide for their riper Years, could he hope for no Returns of Gratitude and Obedience?

IF Strength and Cruelty were left at large to ravage and destroy, a Being in this World would be but an Incumbrance to the Honest and Weak. Our Lives could not be called our own, if the Murderer lay under no Restraint; nor would they be worth our Care, if held on so precarious a Title.—To proceed:

IF these Commandments of God had not established a Man's Wife an unalienable Property, all the dear Relations of Husband, Father, Brother, would be unknown; and what in their Stead? A Community worse than brutal; fatal Contention, endless Strife, loathsome Diseases, and every Evil. The Children of Men might justly then be stiled, Children of Nature, left loose to wander thro' all her Wilds. *None to take them by the Hand*, and guide their early Steps in the Paths of Virtue, and Reason would render them more unhappy in themselves, and destructive to each other.

been so stupidly addicted, that it could never be restrained by all the signal Judgments inflicted on them for their Rebellion, and all the miraculous Deliverances they had experienced upon their Return to their Duty. And, is it not more than probable, that we, if we had not one Day in our Week set apart for public Devotion and Instruction, should, like them, not only forget the Laws of our Creation, but the very express Commandments of God?

SUCH

SUCH is the artful Thief, that Beast of Prey, here also prohibited, who, like the Adulterer, *waiteth for the Twilight*, and dreads nothing so much as the Day.—What is it that animates our Industry, and renders all the Toils of Life endurable? Nothing surely, but the pleasing Hope of Property, of something which he may call his own, wipes the Sweat and Dust from the Brow of the laborious Husbandman, and cheers him with the smiling Prospect of feeding on that Bread which he has so honestly earned.—Were every strong Invader or crafty Thief licenced to dispossess him, must not all Industry cease among Men?

ANOTHER Kind of Thief is forbidden by our next Commandment; a Theft which our Laws does not punish with a Gibbet, tho' it deprives us of what is very sacred and dear to us, and that is, a *good Name*, which is of such Advantage, that *Solomon* tells us, it *maketh the Bones fat*. Had it not been secured to us, Virtue would have wanted one of its Sanctions; and it is Pity to deprive it of that little accessary Reward of Credit and Reputation, to which it has so just a Title. How unstable its Foundation, were the Slanderer, that Enemy that sows Tares in our Fields while Men sleep, at Liberty to choke and infect the good Seed we had sown? But how dreadful the Effects, when Slander is invenomed by an Oath, which is a solemn Appeal to God, as a Voucher of the Truth of what we may be called upon to attest, and on which the Life, as well as Property, of our Neighbour may depend.

BUT we find these ten short Commandments do not only prune away the luxuriant Branches of Wickedness and Vice, but lay the Ax to the Root of the Tree, *the Root of all Evil, Covetousness*. The Man that indulges himself to covet, can his Neighbour be sure that he will go no farther? Besides, what Complacency can the Wretch enjoy
in

in his own, when the Possessions of another are the Objects of his Desires?

BUT, tho' these Commandments check the Force of external Violence, and guard us against the Assaults of others, there was still something wanting to secure us against ourselves; to calm the boisterous Passions which too often ruffle the Soul, and indispose it for every rational Enjoyment. The Gospel has supplied that Want by a Commandment, enjoining *Charity*; a Grace that softens all the rougher Passions of our Nature, and is for ever accompanied with Peace and Content. As it kindles up a generous Love of others, a tender Feeling of the Wants and Infirmities of our Fellow-Creatures, and a pleasing Sensation of their Happiness, it checks and restrains that epidemic Passion of inordinate *Self-love*, the detestable Cause of most Evils which appear in the World. Pride, Vain-glory, Covetousness, Envy, Hatred,* Malice, and all Uncharitableness, are the poisonous Brood that spring from Self-love, and all of these are pregnant with innumerable Mischiefs. Charity stifles the fatal Cause, the accursed Parent of those malignant Evils. For who can be proud that's charitable? Who cruel, envious or revengeful, that has Charity? Who can love himself too well, that love his Neighbour as himself?

CHARITY'S Element is Love; nor can she breathe another Spirit. If any one are ready to offend, *she* is more ready to forgive, and fails not to vanquish every Foe, armed only with Patience and Kindness, the Sword of the Spirit, and the Breast-plate of Righteousness.

TRULY, my Brethren, this excellent Grace is all Beauty, desirable and lovely. When this heavenly Plant takes Root in the Heart, it banishes away every noxious Weed, Briers and Thorns,
the

the natural Product, shall fade away before it, and it shall bring forth Blossoms of eternal Joy.

WERE these Commandments as universally observed, as the Obligation is general, the Consequence would be, *Glory to God in the Highest, Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men.* Earth would be no more stigmatized as a Vale of Tares, but present us with a little lively Landskip of Heaven.

To the bold Violation of these, I had almost said, all, the real Miseries of Life are owing; as well the galling Stings of Envy, Pride, Cruelty, that necessarily corrode the conscious Heart of the merciless Oppressor, as the Groans and Tears of the Wronged and Oppressed. The turbulent Passions, inherent in our Nature, would, like the troubled Sea, if left to themselves, for ever cast up Mire and Dirt. Was it not Goodness and Wisdom, truly divine, to confine them within proper Bounds and Limits? What Insults and Oppressions would they occasion, if, unrestrained, the Strong to commit, and the Weak to endure? Dismal would be the Effects, if Men were left to follow the Dictates of their selfish Passions, thro' all the Ways of Cruelty and Oppression they would naturally lead them.

To obviate these deplorable Evils has not only been the Care of Heaven, but the Study of the best and wisest of every Nation upon Earth, from the very Beginning of Time: And some very ancient Heathen Law-givers are honoured and esteemed by the present Generation. But, as *Moses* had written before them, what they borrowed from him are the Laws of God. He best knew the Hearts of Men, the strong Influence of Self-love planted as an Instinct in his animal Nature. — He saw the craving Senses, like the Daughters of *Solomon's* Horse-leech, always crying, *Give, give*; and knew them to be treacherous Betrayers

of the Soul into Sin and Death.—Too good to abandon his intelligent Creature to their precipitate Dictates, he gave him Reason, and Laws founded on that Reason, to enable him to taste the Sweets of social Pleasure, with assenting Reason and approving Conscience: And the Fool that grasps at Joy without *their* Concurrence will find it to his Cost, diminished by the one, and imbibtered by the other.

CAN that Creature be called intelligent, who does not see that Benevolence was the moving Spring in the Almighty, thro' all his Works both of Creation and Providence? What other Cause can be assigned for his calling his numerous Family of the Universe into Being, than that he might have proper Objects, to whom he might communicate the Overflowings of his Goodness, and that every Creature should enjoy his proper Share of that Happiness which must necessarily result from it? What other End could *he* have in view, by issuing out those Commandments, of which I have been speaking, but to direct us with Ease and Complacency, thro' all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life? I have shewn you, in a few Words, how essential they are to our own Happiness, but surely they extend no further to him, than as he has Pleasure in the Prosperity of his People; so that nothing is more evident than that *in keeping of them there is great Reward*, tho' we were never to expect any further Retribution; and that to offend *him*, we must first render ourselves unhappy, since the End of his Laws is the Perfection of our Nature in our present Seat of Discipline, that we may, at length, be meet *Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. For *Godliness is profitable unto all Things, having Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come*.—Which I intend the Subject of another Discourse.

I HAVE

I HAVE here all along addressed myself to such of you as are in Love with this present World. I have not attempted to depreciate it in your Esteem, for truly it is furnished out with Delights, and stored with Enjoyments. I shall allow also, that those Appetites and Passions, which God has given you, were intended by him for your Profit and Delight, to be gratified and pleased. He has not set the good Things of Life before us, and commanded us to want in the Midst of Plenty; *for every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if received with Thanksgiving*, 1. Tim, 4, 4. Thus we may taste all the Sweets of Life, without one bitter Ingredient. But, if Men will obstinately and daringly break out of their King's High-way, take what they think a short Cut to Felicity, and over-leap all the Boundaries of their Duty, they deservedly wander from *the Haven where they would be*, fall into Difficulties, sad and inextricable; all the Joys they promised to their Souls are turned into so many Lamentations of their Vanity, and they are only rewarded with Disappointment and Remorse.—Whereas, did they patiently seek them in the Ways of God's Laws, and Works of his Commandments, is there a natural Desire in the capacious Soul of Man, that has not been the Object of his Creator's Care? One sensitive Appetite forgotten, and left unprovided with an innocent Gratification?—Gratification so refined, that assenting Reason and approving Conscience give lasting Relish to transient Joy.

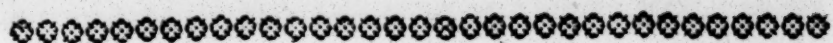
THERE are brutal Passions inherent in us, which smile in the Fancy, and flatter the Sense. They are often too successful in alluring us from our Duty: But are we not armed with Reason and Conscience sufficient, if the Fault be not our own, to curb and restrain them? If we yield to their Sol-

licitations, tho' God has placed us in so exalted a Rank of Beings, we degenerate into Brutes, labouring only to arrive at their sordid Gratifications, Delights never provided for Men by their wise Creator, but placed as far above their Enjoyment, as he intended them below their Esteem. But, let us make it the one Thing needful, to live up to the Dignity of our Nature. We shall find ourselves made but a little lower than the Angels, if we strive to imitate them, hearkening to the Voice of God, and doing his Commandments with Pleasure.

ADORED be the bountiful Author of our Being, who has left nothing unmade that is necessary to our Pleasure, and nothing untold that belongs to our Peace.—Who, knowing the Necessities of our Nature, has provided against all our Wants, —And let us beseech Almighty God to direct, sanctify and govern both our Hearts and Bodies, in the Ways of his Laws, and in the Works of his Commandments, that now and ever we may be preserved in Body and Soul, thro' Jesus Christ, our Lord.

4 AP 54

EXTRACTS



EXTRACTS
FROM
LETTERS,

WRITTEN TO THE

Rev'd. JOHN WESLEY,

And OTHERS,

Relating to the foregoing

SERMON.

Recommended to the Consideration of the

METHODISTS.



STORY

THE

ART OF WRITING



2000-01-01 to 2000-01-01

MEMORANDUM

ed. to nonresident aliens at least \$100,000.

MEMPHIS LIGHTS

EXTRACTS, &c.

EXTRACT I.

I KNOW you are acquainted with Mr. C—— and his Wife, who are by far the most remarkable of all my Parishioners for Piety and Zeal, (I wish I could say, *according to Knowledge*.) They are in better worldly Circumstances than the rest of their Brethren about me. I missed that Family from Church five or six Sundays. Hearing they were well, and at Home, I made them a Visit, and asked the Reason of their Absence. Mrs. C—— said she would deal sincerely with me.—In the last Sermon she had heard from me, I had given such Encouragement to all Sin and Wickedness, she had resolved never to hear me more. I told her, she must have mistaken me; for I had never uttered Words that could bear any such Sense.—No; she could not be mistaken, for she was taught of God.—By extraordinary Illumination, Madam?—Yes, Sir, by extraordinary Illumination.—Pray what was the Subject?—She did not know.—The Text could not offend you?—She did not remember it.—If she could furnish me with the least Hint to enable me to distinguish it, I would send it her to read.—No;—she would read nothing but the

the Word of God, and Mr. *Wesley*.—I asked her Husband who was present, but silent.—Did he remember any Thing in that Sermon—? Yes, one Word only, which was *promulged*.—He did not understand it.—He never listened to any Preachers but their own; he could expect nothing but *Works and dry Morality*. It was his Wife that found out the Sin and Wickedness in mine. Upon the Whole; they had five in their Family, who *knew* that their Sins were forgiven, who should be their Church for the future; as they found in Scripture, that the Apostles had set up Churches in private Houses.—I greatly pitied them.—We parted friendly; as I still hoped to recover her in the Spirit of Meekness.

EXTRACT II.

AMONG my Parishioners are Persons of Distinction with some of the highest Rank, and, in general, of very good Sense. I was not under the least Apprehension of suffering in their Esteem, upon Account of Mrs. C——'s Critic on a Sermon of mine, preached, she did not know when, and of which she knew neither Text nor Margent. But, as it began to be talked abroad, that some Tenets of mine were so shocking, that they had frightened a whole Family of the most pious and zealous Protestants I had from their Parish Church; that however *Delwin* Church had been frequented, and an Act of Vestry made for enlarging it, during the present Incumbency there would be Room enough. Slander never wanted Tongues to propagate it; and being often asked, what Doctrine of mine had occasioned such a Cry? it was high Time to use all Means to find out

out that offensive Sermon. I sat down to a thorough Search through all the Discourses I had given for several Months, for that profane, heretical (I rather believe obscene) Word, *Promulged*, and was so fortunate as to meet with it in the present only; and in the same, the *true* Gratification of the sensual Appetites recommended, which I have made the Title of that Discourse.

IN two or three Weeks Mrs. C—— did me the Favour to come to dine with me, and brought Mr. Oddy with her. In a little good-humoured Raillery after Dinner, I asked him, was he not afraid to preach before so formidable a Critic as that Lady? She had found great Faults in a Sermon of mine, which no Body else could discover. But he must read it, and shew me where to correct it. It was read through, and carefully examined by both. He was strongly pre-possessed in the Lady's Favour.—Don't you say here, God gave us Appetites to be gratified? But read a Line farther, and you will find, it is only in the Way God has prescribed.—There was a full Stop, and he need go no farther for the Sense. He insisted long upon it, and would have carried it home with him, had not St. *Paul* put a full Stop after.—*Let us eat and drink, for To-morrow we die.*—He at last acknowledged it a good Discourse, but sure I would not call it more than a moral one, as there was not one Word of the Corruption of our Nature, and pointed a Place where it might have been brought in.—I thought it quite impertinent to my Subject, tho' it was always their's, whatever the Text. If a Scripture Doctrine, it had been sufficiently inculcated, as it is never forgotten by the Profligate, when they want an Excuse for Sin: And is, indeed, a very good one, if their Maker be chargeable with the Guilt Men have brought on themselves.—She was so far reconciled to me, that, if I would come to her

D

House,

House, and preach without Notes, she would hear me. Mr. *Oddy* undertook to prove, that reading Sermons was not preaching the Gospel, since without a Precedent from Christ, or the Apostles.

I was in *Dublin* about a Month ago, and very glad to hear my Favourite, Mr. *Welsh*, was in Town, who is of the same Opinion in Regard to Notes. No Man had ever so suddenly stole into my Affections. He had been bred in a little obscure Country School, to get *Latin* enough to say Mass with, being designed for a Popish Priest; but, in reading the Bible, and finding no Support there for Popery, conformed, and turned Methodist Preacher in *Irish*, his *English* scarce intelligible. When I first saw him, his uncommonly awkward Mein, his good-humoured, pale, meagre Countenance, his heroic Enthusiasm and undaunted Resolution in the Cause of his Conscience, the Simplicity of his Manners, and the Integrity of his Heart; to all which were added, a strong uncultivated Understanding, which rendered the Composition in the Whole most agreeable. Attended with these Qualifications, and the Mob at his Heels, he was a welcome Guest to me, Night or Day. But a little Acquaintance with Church History will shew, that Ease and Prosperity can change the Genius of Christian Societies, when Fire and Faggot cannot.

I MADE him a Visit, and laid the Sermon before him, and three others then with him, who I believe were all Preachers; not doubting but he would set Mrs. C—— right, and save you and me this Trouble. How great was my Surprize to find, that *the pure Gold was become Dross*.

THE Sermon had never been written fair over, but had many Blots and Interlineations, so that I was obliged to read it myself. I observed he took very little Notice of it, but, when I had done,
took

took it up, and carefully examined it, suspecting, as he told me, that the Corrections had been made since it had been preached; but happily not a Blot that could not be seen through.—I was almost angry.—My present Inquisitor was not so candid as Mr. Oddy, for *he* could not be prevailed on to lay his Finger on one offensive Place: But his Sister C——'s Infallibility must be supported. He was apprized of the Cause, and determined on his Sentence before the Cause came into his Court. And accordingly pronounced, with magisterial Authority, *Mrs. C—— in the right, and that no Christian ought to hear such Sermons.*—It is not possible he can be turned so great a Fool, as really to believe that Discourse immoral; whatever may be thought of his complimenting a Sister of her Importance with his Anathema against it. But he has been in *England* two or three Years, and now his rough Understanding is greatly polished. When I first knew him, he would not have been so complaisant to an Angel.

THERE'S a Lady in a remote Part of the Kingdom, who has honoured me with a very close Correspondence for four or five Years, tho' I never was so happy as to see her. Her Fortune, Sense and Breeding render her the Pride and Glory of your Society. Speaking of our Correspondence, I was amazed to hear Mr. *Wells* declare, with papal Authority, *she should be forbidden to continue it.*—I had a Pocket full of Letters, written to and from her and others upon Mrs. C——'s Defection, which I had laid before those Gentlemen. I cannot say, I did not put up my Sermon with the rest of my Papers upon parting; but that I went directly home, locked them all in my Escutore, and the next Day the whole Bundle in my Cloak-bag, and left Town. When I came home, all safe but the Sermon, sent back to have the Escutore searched for it.—In vain.—All I

D 2

dare

dare venture to say is, I never saw it since in their Hands, and since I declared my Resolution to publish it; and now finding it irrecoverable, sat down and transcribed it from my Memory, which must be a very treacherous one if it has failed me much. It was written more than thirty Years ago, and I am afraid its Stile will shew it juvenile. Preached often in *Dublin*, and other Places, especially since Mrs. C——'s Report of it, and read over twenty Times at least to others; but the Directors of her Conscience and her Senses have now indeed a Pretence for saying it is not the same Sermon; which, if it be not, it is for want of the Original, and I pray God it may not be their own Faults. I have been obliged to insert some Sentences to connect Paragraphs, which perhaps were transposed, and where I added one, in Relation to the Benefits conferred on us by the fourth Commandment, I threw it into a Note to obviate their Cavils. But I solemnly declare, I have not added or diminished by one single Word, to extenuate the Guilt of which it is accused,—rather the contrary.

EXTRACT III.

I WAS very sure, publishing the Sermon would vindicate it from their Censures in the Opinion of all, whose Senses were in their own keeping. And while I thought Mrs. C—— its only Accuser, I was unwilling to weaken the little Credit of a Society, the Honesty of whose Hearts in general, I was very sure, made the public ample Recompence for the Weakness of their Heads; and whom I have always represented as rather bigotted to, than zealous of, the Doctrines and Discipline of the established Church. Such Mr.

Wesley

Wesley appears in all his Writings: And *Mr. Evans*, the only Writer you can boast, tells us, in the Name of that Society, That the constant Attendance on the public Duties of the established Church is the Condition of their Charter and Freedom in the Communion of Saints. Such a Declaration with a conformable Practice, of which I was a strict Observer, very much endeared them to me, nor had I the least Suspicion of their forming a new Schism, 'till my late Visit to *Mr. Welsh*.

I AM much afraid you'll find yourselves very soon under a Necessity of doubting the divine Legation of that Gentleman, or separating from that Church, of which you were born holy Members. 1. Cor. 7, 14.

IN your Doctrines and your Lives you have followed very closely the late Christians, who were called *Puritans*. But they were charged with two unpardonable Errors, from which you have hitherto kept yourselves clear. The one, an immovable Aversion to the established Church; the other, a stupid Attachment to the detestable Doctrine of Predestination. I have great Reason to fear you stand tottering on the Brink, and in great Danger of falling into them both. These, to my Knowledge, two or three Years ago, *Mr. Welsh* abhorred as much as you or I did, but I have Reason to fear he has since adopted them. His declaring that it was a Christian's Duty, rather to separate from the established Church, than hear such a Sermon, wants no other Instance to shew, how well he loves her*. And his high Encomiums on *Mr. Hervey's Dialogues* demonstrate his Affection for the Predestinarian Principles, which they are intended to inculcate. Is there one Member in

*I have been told, that they only adhered to the established Church, to her Creeds, Articles and Homilies, which we had forsaken; but by such only as were incapable of distinguishing between Articles of Peace and those of Faith.

your

your Society that can read, and is worth five Shillings, that has not been pressed to buy them? My good Correspondent intreated me to read them, and send her my Opinion. At her Request, I sat down to his laboured, logical, metaphysical, mystical, allegorical, sophistical, fullsomely poetical Entertainment. His Divinity as fantastically dressed as his Collyflowers, *veiling their snowy Breasts under green Umbrellas*. He has given you two Volumes, filled with what he calls Arguments, (which you understand no better than the Hebrew Mr. *Welsb* preaches to you) to prove that God will never admit such a Creature as Man into his Presence, 'till *he is pleased to cloath him in the Robes of Christ's Righteousness*. But pray which of you would not love and honour that noble Lord, who admitted you to his Table, in your own thread-bare Coat, if clean, as much, as if he had dressed you up in an embroidered Suit of his Son's; and, I think, a red-hot Dispute about such a Point of Honour impertinent and ridiculous on both Sides. Yet, Mr. *Hervey* takes this Doctrine for as *faithful a Saying, and as worthy of all Acceptation*, as, *that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners*. Perhaps he thinks with *Foster*, that *Religion is the better liked, the less it is understood*. Is it for this Reason your Libraries are now enlarged, and you are not only permitted, but commanded, to read, with *the Word of God*; and Mr. *Wesley*, that also of Mr. *Hervey*? Of whom I gave my Opinion as freely as I have done here, in my Answer to my Correspondent, which your spiritual Pastors and Masters saw, and for which they have ordered Reprisals to be made on my Sermon.

I CANNOT help imputing Mrs. C——'s Censure of it to such another personal Resentment. She told me, some Time ago, at her House, that, as I was neither afraid nor ashamed to preach other

Men's

Men's Works, she had a Request to make me, which was, to take a Volume of Mr. *Wesley's* Sermons up with me to the Pulpit, and read one which she pointed out—? And why not as well as one of *Foster's* or *Abernethy's*, and that I might give the Book, as I did their's, to any that pleased to take it home and read—? I thought it my indispensable Duty, if persuaded my Hearers would be better edified by his Works than my own,—that I would read the Sermon, and give her my Answer, which I did, and then let her know, that I never delivered Doctrines from my Pulpit, quite out of the Compass of my own Comprehension, and desired to be excused. But she could never forgive me.

EXTRACT IV.

BUT let us suppose, that we had been favoured with no more Gospel Revelation than what we have received from Christ's own Mouth, in his Sermons, and other public and private Discourses; would any of you dare to say, that we should have wanted any Notices of our universal Duty to God, our Neighbour, and ourselves, if *St. Paul* had not been chosen for his deep Learning in the cabalistical Divinity of the *Jews*, and metaphysical Subtleties of the heathen Philosophers, and sent to combat them with their own Weapons? Had not a Sect of *Jewish* Proselytes started up and troubled the Church, saying, *it was necessary to keep the Law of Moses*, you would have had no Foundation for your mystical Doctrines. All the Metaphysics of *Aristotle* could never have extracted them from any Words spoken by Christ himself. And, indeed, a Jesuit, writing of the Salvation of that heathen Philosopher, tells
us,

us, that without *him* we should have been ignorant of many Christian Mysteries in that Case. Your Society could have found nothing in the New Testament, but *Works* and *dry Morality*, except the Necessity of a firm Belief, that God sent his Son from Heaven, to republish the lost and forgotten *Law of Nature*, originally written by the Finger of God on the Hearts of Men, and to die a Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World. This is the Substance of Christianity, and *this* every Christian knows as well as you.—What would you have done for that useless and consequently worthless Distinction between *Faith* and *Works*, on which the very Essence of your Society depends? How could you have affirmed *Justification* by the one, rather than by the other? If you meant, as St. *Paul* did, the *Works* of the ceremonial Law, you would have had none to dispute with. If the *Works* of solid Righteousness and substantial Virtue, as St. *James* did, and tell us, that God will neither *justify* nor *reward* for *them*, no Body in their Senses would believe you. You allow *good Works* to be the *Fruit of Faith*; but would make us believe, that the Fruit is only to be valued for the Sake of the Tree; the Tree, by no Means, for the Sake of the Fruit.

SUCH dry and dark Speculations, which puzzle the Head without mending the Heart, and have no Connection with the Glory of God, or the Good of Mankind, are the very Characteristicks of your Society. Such Kind of Doctrines have been the Cause of bitter Contentions, such Seas of Blood, as might desolate Earth, and populate Hell.—What Thanks are due to God, for Magistrates wise and good, who have freed us from the Tyranny of cruel Zealots and stupid Bigots, who would compel us, not only to act contrary to our Reason and Conscience, but (pardon the Absurdity of the Expression) to think against them, and endure

dure no Dissenter, when armed with Power, to establish themselves the Standards of Truth and Orthodoxy?

I THINK I have demonstrated some solid Benefits accruing to Mankind from every one of God's Commandments, and that *in keeping of them there is great Reward*. I should be glad to be informed, what Reward is annexed to the keeping those of Mr. *Wells* and Mr. *Hervy*? All they say for them is, they can be proved from the Scriptures.

—By the controversial Writings, which engross your Attention, of St. *Paul*, properly wrested, in which St. *Peter* found Things hard to be understood, *Pet. 3, 26*, an Imagination well heated can prove every Thing, from which that Apostle does not undertake to prove any Thing. I would not here discourage the reading any Part of God's Word. The Treasures contained therein can never be exhausted; and, in an Age of Light and Liberty, new Discoveries may be made every Day of God's merciful Designs towards the Sons of Men, which may endear him more and more to our Affections, and doubtless he has something like Complacency in beholding his intelligent Creature employing his noble Talent of Reason to the valuable Purposes for which it was bestowed; investigating his moral Perfections, and studying to be like him, vindicating his Honour from the Stains it hath sustained from the Ignorance and Artifice of such as in all Ages engrossed to themselves the Authority of explaining his Nature and his Will, and extracting solid Sense from his revealed Word, in which your Society can find nothing but Mystery.

In this imperfect State, err we may,—nay, we must. But nothing is more sure than, that God will wink at our Ignorance and involuntary Mistakes: As it would be an Affront to his moral Perfections to imagine, he would propose a Doc-

E

trine,

trine, either relating to Faith or Practice, to us, his feeble Creatures, to be received on Pain of his Displeasure, where the Sense of his Words could possibly be mistaken by an honest Enquirer into his Duty.—If Christians were as indulgent to one another as God is to us all, what would be the Consequence? Why,—*Glory to God in the Highest, on Earth Peace, and Good-will towards Men*.—But, if Doctrines, extracted from difficult Places of his Word, are made Tests and Watch-words of a private Party, who confine the Favour of God to themselves, and violate all the Laws of Charity to support their Reveries, imposing the most malignant Sense on the good Words and Actions of others,—these are fearful Symptoms of tainted Hearts.

P. S. I am already apprized that I am likely to fall under great Contempt, for the Meanness of my Condescension through this whole Affair.—The Methodists, indeed, are my only Accusers; but no Body knows, how great a Matter a little Fire may kindle. To quench it early is a Point of Policy; but call Conscience into the Case, and I cannot think a Shepherd can stoop too low, to lift some poor weak Sheep out of a Pit, into which they have fallen.—Besides,—I have Reason to fear, mine is, or will very soon be, a common Case with many of my Brethren, who serve Country Cures, and if they condescend to read it, they may find the Constitutions of many Patients, their Duty will oblige them to confer with, carefully considered, and faithfully represented, which may be a great Help to them in applying Remedies.

4 AP 54

P. I. N. I. S.

